



Southeast Perspective

a publication of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

May '98

Clergy Alerts

The Conference is looking for a volunteer to serve as **Resource Librarian**, managing the Atlanta-based Conference Resource Center on a mail-lending basis. The position requires a commitment of four to eight hours each month, maintaining the Center's lending activity.

The **1998 Southeast Women's Retreat** will be held November 20-22 at Shocco Springs Conference Center in Talladega, Alabama under the theme, *God's Amistad—An Invitation to the Table*.

AUCC Physicians Fellowship is being established. Interested physicians should send name, address, phone(s), fax and e-mail addresses to the Conference office.

The *Interfaith Gathering on Health Care* will be held in Memphis, May 3-5. If you're interested in attending, call the Conference office for details.

Registration information for the following conferences is available from the Conference office —

- May 22-25 in Port Orchard, Washington: a retreat for men, *Breaking Down Barriers and Overcoming Distrust*. Call Rev. Arthur Cribbs at 216/736 2201 for info.
- June 10-11 in York, PA: *Ecumenical Vision*, the Mercersburg Convocation and Forum. Call 717/848 1775 for info.
- July 13-17 at Columbia Theological Seminary: *The Transition from Seminary to the First Parish*. Call 404/687 4562 for info.
- February 3-6, 1999 in Chicago: *Faith Odyssey*, an experience for church educators, pastors, and educational leaders.

Conference Office: 800/807 1993

Church & Ministry Committees Gather

The Church and Ministry Committees serving the four Associations of the Southeast Conference gathered for a retreat with Rev. Gene Kraus of the Office for Church Life and Leadership on March 6-7. The purpose of the retreat was to review the ways in which the groups can collaborate more fully across the Conference.

The groups agreed that the following things could be done together —

- develop guidelines for clergy compensation, and put those guidelines into the hands of all congregations and ministers
- conduct a written periodic review for all people holding Ministerial Standing in the Southeast Conference
- distribute scholarship money to deserving candidates who are In-Care in the Conference, and who hold church membership in a church in the Southeast Conference
- develop continued education events and clergy retreats
- develop a retreat for non-parish clergy
- conduct a recognition for all In-Care students at the Annual Meeting of the Conference
- establish career and psychological reviews, and evaluations for all candidates who are entering In-Care status, or for all clergy from other denominations who wish to transfer to the United Church of Christ.

The four association Church and Ministry Committees look forward to developing these and other opportunities for cooperation in the coming months.

Covenant for Renewal Team Begins Training

February 8-9, fifteen clergy and laity gathered in Chattanooga to be trained as Leaders for the *Covenant for Renewal* program. The retreat was led by John Mingus, our interim Conference Associate for Congregational Renewal and Development. Those gathered spent time together identifying needs in congregations of the Southeast Conference, and ways in which the Team can reach out to congregations by inviting them to join the *Covenant*.

The mission statement of the *Covenant for Renewal* team is

God is calling us to work within the framework of our covenants, to support the renewal of the churches of the Southeast Conference as they seek to be and to do all that God created them to be and to do.

The Conference will assemble teams of people to guide congregations as they identify their vision, and then find ways to move toward God's future for their congregation. The *Covenant for Renewal* will be an invitation for congregations to grow in the ways that they believe God is calling them to grow, and to join in a covenant of mutual support with other congregations, with the Southeast Conference, and with God.

John Mingus will introduce the *Covenant for Renewal* in a workshop at the Annual Meeting, June 12-14.

Transitions

DEATHS

- Eleanor G. Scovill, wife of Donald Scovill for 57 years, in November.
- Bob Peeples, pastor emeritus of Pleasant Hill Community Church

RECOVERING

- Chris and Lorna Hester, from a youth trip van accident in March. (No one was seriously hurt — sorry we missed this last month.)

CHURCHES

- United Congregational, LaGrange (GA) voted 25-10-2 to withdraw from the United Church of Christ
- Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta voted to become Open & Affirming

ORDINATIONS

- Cheri Lovell, May 24 at Central Congregational in Atlanta

Board Highlights

The Board of Directors of the Southeast Conference met on January 9, and took the following actions:

- Received with regret the resignations of Nancy Donny and Dan Rosemergy from Board membership
- Elected Budd Friend-Jones to the Chair of the Commission on Church and Ministry, and Milton Hurst to the Chair of the Commission on Church Development and Evangelism
- Appointed Arthur Domby of Atlanta as Conference attorney
- Authorized establishment of a Scholarship Committee
- Increased the Conference contribution to National OCWM to a total of \$20,000 for 1998
- Acted to transfer \$5,000 from the Visions '91 Campaign, plus up to \$2,000 from the remaining balance at the end of 1998, to the work of the Allen Retreat Center
- Received a report that the Conference is working with the Board for Homeland Ministries to explore the feasibility of an African-American church start in Atlanta
- Received a report that no more funding is being provided to Covenant Church in Columbia, SC

Complete Annual Meeting schedule and reservation information is included in a pull-out section in the Spring issues of *Southeast News*.

Clip and photocopy

1998 OCWM Contributions to date

as of March 31, 1998

Alabama — Tennessee Association

Birmingham, First Congregational	\$ 2,500.
Birmingham, Pilgrim Congregational UCC	1,626.
Chattanooga, Pilgrim Congregational UCC	2,496.
Crossville, Grace Community UCC	600.
Crossville, United Christian Church UCWF	150.
Deer Lodge Congregational UCC	300.
Fairfield Glade Community Church	950.
Garden City Congregational Christian	125.
Montgomery, Community Congregational UCC	2,850.
Nashville, First United Church of Christ	1250.
Nashville, Howard Congregational UCC	100.
Pleasant Hill Community Church UCC	4,758.
United Church of Huntsville	1,950.
TOTAL ALA-TENN	\$ 19,655.

South Alabama — Northwest Florida Association

Brantley, Liberty Congregational	\$ 100.
TOTAL SAL-NWFL	\$ 100.

Georgia — South Carolina Association

Atlanta, Central Congregational UCC	\$ 7,900.
Atlanta, Rush Memorial Congregational UCC	108.
Charleston, Circular Congregational UCC	1,000.
Jonesboro/Hampton, Trinity UCC	240.
Marietta, Pilgrimage UCC	1,900.
TOTAL GA-SC	\$ 11,148.

East Alabama — West Georgia Association

Lanett Congregational Christian UCC	\$ 620.
Pine Mountain, Oak Grove Congreg. Christian	1,140.
Roanoke, New Hope Congregational Christian	570.
Roanoke, North Main Congregational Christian	190.
Wadley, Corinth Christian	119.
Woodbury, Jones Chapel United Congreg. Chr.	622.
TOTAL EAL-WGA	\$ 3,261.

Conference Clips

- Is it tune-up time for your marriage? Bill and Amy Chew are offering a Marriage Encounter Weekend in Huntsville, AL June 5-7. If you want to put a spark back into your relationship, call the Chews for more information. Infatuation is not reserved for the young! Call 256/882 3727 or e-mail: wmchew@ro.com.
- Have crafts, books, bumper stickers or buttons you'd like to display or sell at the Annual Meeting? Space is available for "boutique" and informational tables — just call Gerry Hudson in the Conference office to request a reservation.
- Thanks to the efforts of the Southeast Disaster Relief initiative and other groups, members of burned church Oak Grove CME Church in Birmingham broke ground for their new building site on March 1.

Resources

- The AIDS National Interfaith Network has published a 56-page report on how American faith communities respond to the AIDS epidemic. Copies are available for \$5 — call 212/842 0010.
- The story of the UCC's global ministries is told in an excellent video, *Sharing Life in Christ*. For a copy, call 800/325 7061 (\$15). A variety of other UCBWM materials and study guides are available in the Conference office.
- The Justice & Peace Ministry offers materials for its monthly Action Issues. The April/May issue is Global Warming. Call 216/736 2178 for information.
- The UCBHM offers materials especially designed to support youth ministry leaders. If you would like a packet or information, call Gordon Svoboda at 216/736 3800.
- Interested in establishing a relationship with a missionary? Contact Sandra Rooney at the UCBWM, 216/736 3208.
- The Mercersburg Society has published papers from its 1997 forum. A copy is available in the Conference office.
- *Authority and the Church*, a working document from the Confessing Christ Steering Committee, is available from the Conference office.
- New education/Sunday School resources are available from United Church Press. If you haven't received a packet of materials, call 800/537 3394.
- The United Church Insurance Board may be able to decrease your church's insurance costs, while improving your overall coverage! The Board will offer a workshop at the Annual Meeting — in the meantime, information is available from the Conference office.
- *Congregations*, the journal of the Alban Institute, is available in the Conference office each month.
- Copies of "The Relationship of Standing to Faith and Order in the UCC," remarks delivered by Bill Hulteen at a February conference, are available from the Conference office.
- A new video, *Restructuring: A UCC Town Hall*, answers questions related to the denomination's restructuring in 2000. In addition, a workshop about the church's big transition will be held at the Annual Meeting in June.

KYP

- The United Church of Christ has established a Formula of Agreement with the Presbyterian Church USA that will enable our denominations to be in full communion. A festival service will be held on October 4, 1998 in Chicago.
- The UCC is also in conversation with the Alliance of Baptists — an alliance of individuals and churches dedicated to the preservation of historic Baptist principles, freedoms, and traditions.
- The American Bible Society is committing \$5 million to an Internet service, setting aside a free Web page for each of North America's estimated 300,000 churches and congregations. Check out the ABS church site at www.housesofworship.net.
- Cellular telephone companies have discovered a new way to hide their ugly antenna towers — put them inside church steeples! Wellesley (Village) Congregational UCC in MA earn \$72,000 each year from "steeple rental."
- On March 8, the re-creation of the slave ship *Amistad* began with a keel-laying ceremony in Mystic Seaport, CT. The UCBHM has pledged \$225,000 for this important maritime project. When completed in 2000, the 81-foot, \$3.1-million wooden schooner will serve as a floating classroom on race relations.
- Empty 35mm film canisters are finding new life in Rhode Island as shampoo containers for the homeless. Check with your local Traveler's Aide to see if they have a similar project in your area.
- The UCC Scripture Project has received an overwhelming response — more than 1,650 local congregations are participating in the Bible study and survey. The results of the project will be published as a report to the UCC's General Synod in 1999.
- Have you checked out the UCC website lately? It has lectionary resources for pastors and lay leaders (Samuel), ecumenical info and links, pages on "What We Believe," a database of UCC churches and more. To find the page, just type in www.ucc.org.

Conference Calendar

- APR 24-25** **Conference Board of Directors Meeting**
Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta
- MAY 1** **South Alabama/Northwest Florida Leaders Meeting**
time and location to be announced
- MAY 1** **Annual Reports due**
to Southeast Conference office
- MAY 2** **Georgia/South Carolina Church & Ministry Committee**
Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta
- MAY 5** **South Dekalb Search Committee Meeting**
First Congregational, Birmingham
- JUNE 12-14** **Southeast Conference Annual Meeting**
Simpsonwood Retreat Center, Atlanta

TUESDAYS, APR 14 – MAY 26

7 – 9:30pm

UCC polity course with Tim Downs and Dan Sack at Columbia Theological Seminary (Although no academic credit is offered, course counts for ordination polity requirement.)

News, updates, Annual Meeting info and more . . .

Southeast Conference
of the
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